

**MARICOPA COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS MINUTE BOOK**

**SPECIAL SESSION  
April 28, 2004**

The Board of Supervisors of Maricopa County, Arizona convened in Special Session at 9:00 A.M., April 28, 2004, in the Supervisors' Conference Room, 301 W. Jefferson Phoenix, Arizona, with the following members present: Andrew Kunasek, Chairman, District 3, (entered late); Fulton Brock, District 1, Don Stapley, District 2, Max W. Wilson, District 4, and Mary Rose Wilcox, District 5. Also present: Fran McCarroll, Clerk of the Board, Shirley Million, Administrative Coordinator, David Smith, County Administrative Officer and Paul Golab, Deputy County Attorney.

**CORRECTIONAL HEALTH PRESENTATION ON THE CONTINUITY OF MENTAL HEALTH CARE**

Presentation of an overview of the continuity of mental health care in Maricopa County and how the lack of mental health resources require individuals to be treated in the criminal justice system. (C26040300) (ADM2131)

Dr. Joseph Scalzo, Director, Correctional Health Services  
David Hendershott, Chief Deputy, Sheriff's Office  
Assisting: Dr. Gale Steinhauser, Medical Director  
Dr. Patricia Crellin, Mental Health Director, CHS  
Sharon Anthony, Deputy Director, CHS  
Larry Steward, Pharmacy Services Director, CHS  
Pam McCalley, Mental Health Programming, DOC  
Ruth Philliben, Health Care Administrator, CHS  
Joy Dow, Utilization Manager, CHS  
Chief Bill Williams, MCSO  
Elizabeth Stoltz

Vice Chairman Wilson welcomed Dr. Scalzo who said they wanted the Board to help them identify solutions for correcting the growing impact the Seriously Mentally Ill (SMI) are having on Maricopa County through the Criminal Justice System. He described this as a multi-faceted issue with a variety of stakeholders. He explained that mental health care for the seriously mentally ill in County jails is governed by constitutional standards, case law, internal rules, accrediting agency guidelines and established Correctional Health Service's policies and procedures. However, he did draw a distinction between acceptable levels of care and optimal or desired levels of care, which he said has never been attainable because of limited staff to serve the number of SMI who are incarcerated. Dr. Scalzo stated that the real problem lies in the system for handling those individuals outside the jails and the impact of this is felt inside the jail system by Correctional Health workers and the Sheriff's Office personnel.

He stated that the lack of adequate community mental health resources has resulted in the mentally ill being processed and treated through the Criminal Justice System. He added that if the jails are used as a default housing facility for the Seriously Mentally Ill the level of mental health care can only suffer. Dr. Scalzo defined Seriously Mentally Ill and Mental Disorder and gave national percentages identifying the SMI problems for those individuals who are incarcerated including the corresponding conditions that compound the problem, such as homelessness and substance abuse. He said that nationally, 16% of inmates are mentally ill compared to 5% in the general population. Dr. Scalzo said it was important to realize the impact that mental illness can have on a family, the community and the resources of the taxpayers of that community. Annual care for a mentally ill individual in a Community Based Program averages \$20,000. This rises to \$40,000 if the person is in jail and \$60,000 if in prison. A video presentation was given to illustrate his points. In the 1960s society deemed it best to do away with hospitals for the mentally ill in favor of community based programs. The hospitals were eliminated but too

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few community based programs were available and the mentally ill began their sad "relationship" with the Criminal Justice System that has escalated to current proportions.

Chief Williams said that from January to March 2004, 592 individuals were identified as Value Options SMI clients (Value Options: a corporation that the County has contracted with to provide mental health services to individuals that are seriously mentally ill.) with the total number for 2004 estimated at 2,368 individuals. He said there are two psychiatric units, one at Madison Street Jail and the other at the Durango Jail and they average 130 inmates daily total. With a per diem cost of \$150 a day per inmate the annual total is \$7,117,500. He said that 41% of Psych Unit inmates are incarcerated for misdemeanor charges. He added that \$2.9 million a year, or \$29 million over ten years, could be saved if these individuals could be triaged and diverted to other facilities. With regards to mental illness (as differentiated from the seriously mentally ill) the total projected number of individuals processed through Intake for 2004 is estimated at 2,368. Discussion ensued on how individuals were identified as being Seriously Mentally Ill or having some form of mental illness and the problems encountered in identifying them. Dr. Scalzo continued by identifying \$1.7 million that was spent in 2003 on psychotropic medications. This is 68% of his total budget. By comparison 9% of his budget is spent on HIV and 23% on drugs for all other reasons.

Dr. Crellin related some file stories of prisoners with mental health problems and the role played by the courts in their lives as they are sentenced to various facilities. Chief Williams referenced a patient flow chart and commented on the fact that when a community victim is picked up by police there is only one option for them and sheriff's deputies to use, and that option is taking them to the County Jail. He said more options are needed.

**~ Chairman Kunasek entered the meeting ~**

Supervisor Stapley asked if those options would include a diversionary program for those who are non-violent and treatable, Chief Williams said that police who regularly patrol the streets get to know many of these individuals and some feel that options other than the County jail would be more optimal for certain of these individuals. He said that a triage center that could evaluate those in question would be ideal. Discussion ensued on triage programs and benefits, with reports given on the Long Beach, CA clinician/officer team concept, to triage an offender for mental hospitalization or an alternative treatment. Also explored were concepts using a team approach for integrated services as in Illinois and the Maryland Shelter And Treatment Services that has housing as a big component. Statistics were also given on Cook County (IL), Monroe County (NJ) and Albuquerque, NM programs that have reduced prisoner days in jail, injuries, suicides and overall costs through programs they have initiated. He said that proper medication for inmates suffering from mental illness is essential and continuing these meds after they are released, or not continuing them, can be life altering.

Elizabeth Stoltz, Jensen Pharmaceuticals, has spent many years in working for humane treatment of the mentally ill brought a virtual reality machine which would give a world view as seen by a schizophrenic individual when they are not on adequate medication. He said it is an eye-opening experience for normal people to learn what these individuals see and feel throughout their life if they are not treated.

Supervisor Wilson asked how well these individuals stay on their medications when they are released from a structured environment. Dr. Crellin said that not all are able to and noted the difficulties that a homeless person has in being compliant with their medications when they are living in a box somewhere in downtown Phoenix because their ability to manage anything, including medications, is in jeopardy. Often they don't believe they have a mental illness, "so why would you take a pill for something you don't

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think you have?" She said that if they can get some "coke" and experience some short-term relief they would do so, without giving any thought to the long-term side effects.

**~ Supervisor Wilcox entered the meeting ~**

Supervisor Brock asked about the approximate 15% of inmates with mental illness and said, "How does that translate in terms of beds needed that we don't have at both the County and State levels?" Dr. Scalzo responded, "The number of beds that we have to put in the jails is a sad commentary in reference to the beds in the community – the availability of treatment beds within the community is far below what's needed." Dr. Crellin added, " Obviously for the court's order an evaluation process is essential, and that would be a method of diverting some of those clients away from jail."

Supervisor Stapley said it's not so much about what we have in our Criminal Justice System, as it is what is lacking outside the system. It's not just about money but also about common sense attitudes and changes in the laws. He said, "If you are a Values Options patient and commit a crime and eventually released from jail you are ineligible for any kind of federal or state housing assistance. No wonder they're on the streets!" He indicated that there are several serious issues that the County and State need to address when it comes to medications for inmates and also to implement a common sense diversionary program for non-violent, SMI individuals who should not even be in the jails but should be receiving alternative medical care. He added, "I'm convinced it would save the County and the State enormous amounts of money to get this under control."

Discussion ensued on various ways to care for SMI individuals. Pam McCalley said that they partner with the jails and she reported that at a recent national conference on health care for the SMI, Arizona was the only state "who'd even thought to bring Corrections to the table." She felt that in many ways Arizona is leading the field and commented that today's meeting to discuss this matter affirms that "raising these issues confirms that Maricopa County has an awareness above the level that other places are operating at." She related that she had told those attending that conference, "We all share these people and their needs from system to system but we have no coordination among those systems." She said that dollars could be saved and care could be improved if there was coordination and sharing of patient information between the various groups.

Chairman Kunasek said the County is experiencing a huge population increase and this would probably correspond to a comparable increase in individuals who will require mental health care, either in the community or in the jails. He felt this problem "dealt with a moving target" and finding answers today would not solve the problems for tomorrow. He asked how this could be addressed. The answer given was that as our population increases the resources in the community have not kept pace. New jails have been built as the prisoner load has doubled to around 9,000 inmates, but the State Hospital and other community services have not doubled their capacity. 70-80 percent of the SMI in jail are there because of substance abuse issues and capacities in that area must also increase, as must available housing for the homeless. Prevention of mental illness must be addressed and any mental illness that occurs must be diagnosed and treated at as early an age as possible. The numbers of SMI who are incarcerated across the nation are skyrocketing in much greater proportions than in the general population. State Hospitals do not exist any longer in most places and these have not been replaced. Families used to care for loved ones with mental problems to a much greater degree, and today that responsibility is lessening due to some extent to one-parent and smaller families, many of whom are very mobile. The homeless are also mobile and they are not moving to the colder climates.

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Dr. Scalzo said that an inter-agency coordination with funding that follows the individual instead of the various streams of funding to each agency would be preferable. Also recommended was continued development of an integrated multidisciplinary approach and shared accountability involving state and local agencies. He added that a State and County interdisciplinary fact-finding committee should be appointed to do an in-depth study involving all stakeholders. He said that it needs to be addressed on a unified level where all agencies that are involved in the treatment of the mentally ill are involved in the flow to greatest efficiency in spending tax dollars. He said, "The fact that the jails become the dumping ground for the mentally ill indicates that the system is failing."

Supervisor Stapley reported that he, David Smith and Diane Sikokis have been talking to members of the legislature to promote greater dialogue on this issue. Speaker Jake Flake has agreed to appoint an ad-hoc committee of all the stakeholders involved to address this issue. He asked that all County departments and the Courts work with them during the rest of the year to help find constructive methods and solutions to these growing concern.

Several of the Supervisors put on the "glasses" to take advantage of the Virtual Reality program that had been set up to let them feel what life was like as a schizophrenic.

**MEETING ADJOURNED**

There being no further business to come before the Board, the meeting was adjourned.

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Andrew Kunasek, Chairman of the Board

ATTEST:

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Fran McCarroll, Clerk of the Board